

Tidy Towns Competition 2018

Adjudication Report

Centre: **Borris-in-Ossory** Ref: **408**
County: **Laois** Mark: **290**
Category: **B** Date(s): **21/06/2018**

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 2017	Mark Awarded 2018
Community – Your Planning and Involvement	60	45	45
Streetscape & Public Places	50	31	32
Green Spaces and Landscaping	50	44	45
Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality	50	19	20
Sustainability – Doing more with less	50	17	17
Tidiness and Litter Control	90	62	63
Residential Streets & Housing Areas	50	29	29
Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes	50	39	39
TOTAL MARK	450	286	290

Community – Your Planning and Involvement / An Pobal - Pleanáil agus Rannpháirtíocht:

Cuireann an moltóir seo fáilte roimh Borris-in-Ossory (Buirios Mir Osrai) chuig Comórtas na mBailte Slachtmhara SuperValu 2018 agus chuig Ceiliúradh 60 Bliain an Chomórtais.

It is great to see the various community groups that help you in your work. Although litter picking remains a core category within the Tidy Towns competition it is always heartening when youth groups get involved in other categories in improving their community. Well done to the Brownies who planted window boxes and pots at St. Canices' school.

You mentioned your 5 year plan again this year. You say it is near completion and the community are keen to know what projects are prioritized. From this plan you should be able to help formulate your Tidy Towns plan. It is important, to ensure the best use of resources, to include with your submission a short 3 year Tidy Towns plan. There are marks going for this under this category. It does not have to be professionally done up. Just a page with the three years 2019, 2020, 2021 and a few bullet points under each. Alternatively have a table showing if the project is new, ongoing or a future project. It has the added benefit of highlighting to the group the work that was done not just the work that has yet to be done. Please refer to the Tidy Towns website for more information

Streetscape & Public Places / Sráid-Dreach & Áiteanna Poiblí:

Few who pass through your village will fail to remember your distinctive Church of Ireland with its round tower bell tower. It continues to impress.

Like too many places in Ireland, derelict buildings continue to cause an eyesore (in addition to the social and economic waste caused). We refer to the remarks of last year's adjudicator who was "shocked at the state of the Courthouse which is a Protected Structure". We note from an article in the Leinster Express newspaper that this was issue was taken up by some local councillors. You mention in your submission that you are currently in discussion with Laois County Council. We wish you well in these. As the Courthouse is in such a prominent location it does have a big impact on the backdrop to your village.

It would be wonderful if a new use could be found for the abandoned garage site.

The two buildings on either side of Rosie O'Gradys look like they will be in line for renovation soon. One has gone Sale Agreed and one is sold. These in addition to the newly renovated Rose O'Gradys will surely enhance your streetscape.

There are some wonderful examples of how some of your buildings are put too fine use. The old market house is providing a market for Kelly Machinery. Head Rush Hair Salon brightens up the street and adds to its vibrancy.

Sheeran's must be singled out for individual praise. The beautiful newly painted black and white building is enhanced by its gleaming red door. The red bicycle as a pot holder is the icing on the cake here. We presume black and red are your village colours as these are used on your immaculate village pump.

Your lovely wide streetscape with a good wide footpath is a great resource to your village. There is little clutter on it but try and ensure that the signs at the Daybreak store don't encroach out any further. The ATM sign was a potential obstruction.

Your Community hall looks brightly painted with an especially striking red door. There are also nice planters around. The school grounds are well maintained and had the Green Flag flying. The colourful murals, wide paths, good seating areas and pleasant planting makes this a very inviting area. The Church grounds looked well.

Green Spaces and Landscaping / Spásanna Glasa agus Tírdhreachú:

The seating area beside the Church of Ireland is well maintained and colourful.

Hopefully the proposed works for your Courthouse will ensure more enjoy the landscaped area there.

In addition to some individual premises adding their own splash of colour the communal brown planter boxes looked well,

The start of your community garden was observed. The provision of public spaces is very important as it provide people many opportunities to come together and engage within the community. If public spaces are successful they are inclusive of the diversity of groups present in our towns and villages and create a social space for everyone in the society to participate in. As this is a fenced in area it provides greater opportunities for children from the local estate to play. This is also dealt with under Nature and Biodiversity.

Nature and Biodiversity in your Locality / An Dúlra agus an Bhithéagsúlacht i do cheantar:

Your notice to "Come Visit our Bug Hotel" is very informative. Instead of just admiring the work that has gone into these readers will gain information on what creatures might be there, the materials used and the use of these. You are already considering including the importance of pollinators, through your planting planning for your Community Garden. Ensure you seek advice from the Environmental Officer of your County Council to your resources are being put to good use.

This area is increasing in importance. One third of our bee species are threatened with extinction from Ireland. This is because we have drastically reduced the amount of food (flowers) and safe nesting sites in our landscapes.

Everyone can play their part in small simple ways. The All-Ireland Pollinator Plan gives guidance to all, from farmers to local authorities, to schools, gardeners and businesses, to come together to try to create an Ireland where pollinators can survive and thrive.<http://pollinators.ie/communities/>

Pollinator friendly perennials have the added benefit of generally being more cost effective. They have a potential life span of 10-12 years is properly maintained. Small amount of annual replacement supplement as well as complement these. For assistance in this category you can also check out <http://www.biodiversityireland.ie>

Sustainability – Doing more with less / Inmharthanacht - Mórán ar an mbeagán:

This is an area that many groups struggle with. You might get some handy tips on <http://www.epa.ie/begreen/> and on the Tidy Towns website.

Being environmentally friendly doesn't have to always be a cost for businesses.....it can be a help in driving revenue, reducing costs or a mix of both. Many are moving to more energy saving plans as a result. They also might be involved with Repak

You mention water butts in the grounds of St Canices' church. Does this provide all of the watering needs for your communal planting? Since you are planning a 3rd we presume that these have being successful.

The Green flags were flying proudly from the school flag polls. Green flags require a lot of work and these are not awarded lightly. It would be great to see some of projects that your national school is involved in. Maybe a small team of 6th class students could do this next year? We only need a few bullet points of the main achievements.

Tidiness and Litter Control / Slachtmhaireacht agus Rialú Bruscair:

This is an area that you have obviously concentrated on to great effect. The area was in general free of litter and there were no posters spotted.

The bring bank area seems to continue to be a trouble spot for your group. Do the CCTV cameras have any effect here? We noticed that you wish to have these removed, have any other locations being considered? If the area is less private it might provide less chance for dumping here.

Well done on your participation in Laois Clean up Week. It is great to see the inclusion of the school children in this. This generally has a double effect in the actual clean up and hopefully will making them think twice about littering in the future.

Residential Streets & Housing Areas / Sráideanna Cónaithe & Ceantair Tithíochta:

The private houses along your main street are very well kept and many have retained the sash windows which add to the streetscape greatly. The vets building had amazing flowers hanging outside.

One house had plastic flowers in the box, but this was not noticeable from a distance and only became apparent when you went up close!

Mountain View had small yet effective planting at its sign, a nice use of gravel and easier to maintain.

St. Canices' Terrace the individual hanging baskets on the black poles in a lot of the gardens gave a lovely sense of uniformity.

An Auction sign was noted at the unfinished Glenall housing estate. We look forward to reading on improvements here for in next year's submission.

Approach Roads, Streets & Lanes / Bóithre Isteach, Sráideanna & Lánaí:

You have many approach roads to your village so it can be no easy task to ensure their maintenance. In general the verges were well cut back.

The two welcome signs on the main Dublin to Limerick road were particularly well kept with bright planting.

The Borris-in-Ossory sign coming in on the Rock Road was partially obscured by vegetation.

It would be worthwhile to investigate in the future if a full footpath from the housing estates of St. Canice's, Royal Court and Mountain View towards the main village could be built to ensure a better linkage between commercial and residential.

Concluding Remarks:

The point of adjudications is to provide feedback and to help provide areas that you can get support and guidance from, hence the inclusion of the websites etc. The Tidy Towns competition has evolved to have more environmental ethos. As your 5 year plan is to start being implemented next year your village already seems to be including these elements. We wish you well in your continued works in helping your community ensure its potential.